

AGENDA ITEM VI

REAUTHORIZATION OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED RESEARCH UNIT

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

ERNEST J. GAINES CENTER

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In February 2008, the Board acted as follows:

One-year conditional approval is granted for the Ernest J. Gaines Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, effective immediately. As required by Board of Regents Academic Affairs Guidelines: Proposed New Centers, Institutes, and Other Academic/Research Units, UL-Lafayette shall submit to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs a proposal for full approval of the Center by March 1, 2009. In particular, this proposal shall provide for future external funding of the Center.

The University is requesting that an additional year of conditional approval be granted through June 30, 2010, mainly due to a delay in the schedule of obtainment of external funding for the center. Importantly, the institution notes that start-up funds provided by the University at the center's inception (in the amount of \$250K) have not been expended.

The University of Louisiana System granted administrative approval of this request in March 2009.

STAFF SUMMARY

1. Description and Need

Documentation submitted by UL-Lafayette notes the following:

The initial proposal for the Ernest J. Gaines Center was granted conditional one-year approval by the Board of Regents on February 28, 2008. Since this initial approval, the university has reserved and allocated funds for the construction of the center, the architect's plans for the center have been approved, and a line has been established to hire an Archivist/Assistant Professor of Library Science. An active and resourceful Board of Directors has been appointed, providing innovative ideas and guidance in the development of the center. We have pursued several important initiatives, as well, particularly in the areas of fundraising and creative production. These initiatives include:

1. *An 8 to 10 minutes fundraising documentary for the Ernest J. Gaines Center*
2. *A full-length (one hour) documentary on Ernest J. Gaines*
3. *The 2009 Ernest J. Gaines Calendar*
4. *“This Louisiana Thing That Drives Me”: The Legacy of Ernest J. Gaines*
5. *A design for the Gaines Center logo and fundraising brochures*
6. *Contributions of approximately \$112, 400 in artistic and professional services, in addition to all potential royalties from the book “This Louisiana Thing That Drives Me.”*

Because of the major downturn in the economy (and on the advice our advisory board), the Gaines Center has had to plan and initiate a more creative strategy for external funding. Our new strategy and what we have accomplished so far are detailed in the Budget Section of this proposal. We are, therefore, submitting a proposal for another initial authorization for the Ernest J. Gaines Center through June 30, 2010.

The Ernest J. Gaines at University of Louisiana at Lafayette is an international center for scholarship on Ernest Gaines and his work. The center honors the work of UL Lafayette’s Writer-in-Residence Emeritus and will provide a space for scholars and students to work with the Gaines papers and manuscripts. Gaines’s generous donation of his early papers and manuscripts (through 1983) and some artifacts to Edith Garland Dupré Library provided the foundation for the center’s collection. The center also anticipates acquiring the remainder of Gaines’s papers.

Along with the Gaines papers and published scholarship, the Ernest J. Gaines Center can also anticipate the donation of extensive research papers, manuscripts and tape-recorded interviews of Gaines scholars. The center will expand the collection on Ernest Gaines to include all books, journal articles, essays, interviews, theses and dissertations on Ernest Gaines and his work. In addition, it will include a complete collection of all the published translations of Ernest Gaines’s writings. It will be the site of the only complete collection of Ernest Gaines scholarship in the world.

The Ernest J. Gaines Center will also coordinate other activities related to research and scholarship on the work of Ernest J. Gaines. The first of these activities will be an Ernest J. Gaines Scholars Conference at UL Lafayette, bringing in major scholars for presentations and inviting other scholars to do presentations and discussions in sessions, all focused on Ernest Gaines’s fiction.

In correlating the objectives of the research unit with the role, scope, and mission of the institution, the University states:

The goals and objectives of the Ernest J. Gaines Center correlate extremely well with the role, scope, and mission of University of Louisiana at Lafayette. The center will enhance the role of the university in achieving excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, in research, and in public service. The availability of the author’s papers will provide students with the opportunity to understand first hand the workings of literary

genius. The collection of scholarship on Gaines will enhance research opportunities for students, faculty, and visiting scholars. The center will be involved in public service through its presentation of programs and its resources for public interest in a Louisiana writer. In addition, a center focused on the work of a major African American writer will enhance the university's historic commitment to diversity.

2. Need

UL-Lafayette reports the following as it relates to need for the unit:

Ernest J. Gaines is an internationally acclaimed writer. Because of Gaines's long association with University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Writer-in-Residence and his continuing association as Writer-in-Residence Emeritus, it is important for UL Lafayette to establish a permanent connection with this writer and his work. Gaines's contributions are priceless, and the university stands to benefit greatly by establishing itself as the world center for scholarship on Gaines and his work.

There are two parts to the Ernest J. Gaines Center's mission – archival (preserving Gaines papers and scholarship and assuring their accessibility to scholars) and programming (initiating and sponsoring scholarly projects and conferences on the work of Ernest J. Gaines). Both are essential to the legacy of Ernest J. Gaines.

3. Faculty

The University reports that it has committed to providing a new position for an Assistant Professor (to be named) who would serve as Archivist of the center. Assistance and support will be provided as well. Present UL-Lafayette faculty member Marcia Gaudet, Doris Meriwether/BORSF Professor of English, will work directly with the proposed new unit. She has published extensively on Ernest J. Gaines and his fiction

4. Facilities and Equipment

The proposal states:

The Ernest J. Gaines Center is to be located on the third of the Edith Garland Dupré Library. The space is currently unfinished. The footprint of the Center is 2941SF. The Center includes the following spaces: A 1050SF reading room with three different reading and research areas, a 450SF shared conference room, 415SF of secure stacks, a 320SF listening/screening room, an office and a work room. Sharing the reading room, the conference room and a listening/screening room is the Cajun and Creole Music collection. That area also includes secure stacks, an office and a workroom.

The design is conceived as an attractive and welcoming environment for readers and researchers to come in and browse the open collection and artifacts. The central space immediately connotes the purpose as a serious place for research yet provides an

intimate reading inglenook for the casual reader. The furniture evokes the natural environment that inspired Mr. Gaines's work. Art-work will be collected and displayed by Louisiana artists that are in keeping with Mr. Gaines's vision of the South. Furniture will be comfortable yet durable.

The floor plans and the artist rendering for the Gaines Center are attached. The work was done by Dean H. Gordon Brooks, FAIA, along with his graduate student Chris Dufresh. It was done as an assigned special project and occurred at no cost to the University.

5. Administration

The administrative structure of the proposed unit would be as follows:

The Ernest J. Gaines Center would be administered by the Director, an Assistant Professor with training and expertise in Library Science and in literature. The Center Director would report to the Director of Libraries since the Center is primarily a research unit administering archival material. Research Faculty would report their activities to the Dean of Liberal Arts. Both the Dean of Liberal Arts and the Director of Libraries report to the Academic Vice-President.

A Board of Directors has been appointed to advise the Director and Archivist on policies and programming. Members of the Board of Directors include Dr. Charles Triche, Director of Dupré Library; Dr. David Barry, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts; Dr. Marcia Gaudet, Professor of English and Interim Director of the Center; Dr. Jennifer Hightower Jackson, UL Lafayette Diversity Officer; Kay M. Harper, Advancement Officer for Dupré Library; and the Gaines Center Archivist (to be appointed). Members of the community who are valuable members of the board include Dianne S. Gaines (wife of Ernest J. Gaines), Bridget Edwards Boustany, Sandy Austin Mugnier, and Dr. Darrell Bourque (Professor Emeritus of English).

The proposed unit will not affect the present administrative structure of the campus.

6. Budget

The budget narrative explains:

The initial allocation of \$250,000 on the part of University of Louisiana at Lafayette for the Ernest J. Gaines Center has not yet been expended. Funds for the construction of the Gaines Center have been approved and allocated, and at the current time the plans are with the University's Physical Plant Director, Mr. William Crist, who will be supervising the project. It should also be noted that the position of Assistant Professor in Library Science/Archivist for the Gaines Center has not yet been filled.

As noted above, we have initiated a new plan to provide external funding for the Gaines Center. Here is our new strategy and what we have accomplished so far:

- 1. Fundraising documentary for Ernest J. Gaines Center. Charles Richard of UL Lafayette's Cinematic Arts Workshop and Marcia Gaudet have been working with Joe Sanford of Pelican Pictures to produce a documentary of 8 to 10 minutes to be used as an informational fundraiser for the Gaines Center. This documentary, filmed in High Definition, will be used to kick-off the fundraising campaign, and it will also be sent to potential major donors.*
- 2. Fundraising event. We will launch the fundraising campaign with a reception and showing of Gaines Center fundraising documentary. Kay Harper, Development Officer for Dupre Library, is chairing the committee to plan this event for late Spring semester 2009.*
- 3. Design for Gaines Center Logo, letterhead, and fundraising brochure. Graphic Designer, Kevin Hagan from the UL Lafayette College of the Arts, has been working on these designs. A recognizable visual identity for the center is important in fundraising efforts, and we will have these designs completed soon.*
- 4. 2009 Ernest J. Gaines Calendar. This calendar (designed by Leslie Schilling of the UL Lafayette Humanities Resource Center, with pictures, quotations, and other materials provided by Marcia Gaudet and Reggie Young) was sent to potential major donors (such as Oprah Winfrey) along with a letter to let them know that the Gaines Center has been established at UL Lafayette and that we would be launching a major fundraising campaign in the near future.*
- 5. Kresge Grant. The UL Research and Sponsored Programs Pre-Award administrators have reviewed the Gaines Center Letter of Intent for a Kresge Foundation Challenge Grant. Their suggestions have been incorporated.*
- 6. Royalties from "This Louisiana Thing That Drives Me:" The Literature and Legacy of Ernest J. Gaines. All royalties from this book will go toward the Ernest J. Gaines Center. The book was compiled, edited, and introduced by Reggie Young, Marcia Gaudet, and Wiley Cash, all from UL Lafayette. The book is now in press at the Center for Louisiana Studies, UL Lafayette (forthcoming in Spring 2009). The first 100 copies would be Signed (by Gaines) Collector's Editions, to be presented to large donors to the Gaines Center (contributions of \$5,000 or more). Estimated revenue from this initiative is at least \$500,000.*

Contributions to the Ernest J. Gaines Center so far include:

- 1. Cost of producing Gaines fundraising documentary = \$25,000
(Cost estimated by Charles Richard based on the production cost of the BeauSoleil documentary. All production costs are the Gaines documentary*

- contributed by Joe Sanford and Pelican Pictures)*
2. *Cost of producing full-length (one hour) documentary on Gaines = \$75,000.
(Joe Sanford and Pelican Pictures will contribute production costs on the two Gaines documentary projects up to \$100,000. This will cover the costs of the productions. The Gaines Center and the Cinematic Arts Workshop are co-producers of the films and will have all rights to the films.)*
 3. *Contribution of architectural plans and design by Dean H. Gordon Brooks, FAIA, along with his graduate student Chris Dufresh = \$5,400
(The work was done as an assigned special project and occurred at no cost to the university.)*
 4. *Contribution of design services of Graphic Designer Kevin Hagan = \$2,000*
 5. *Contribution of copies of all first editions of Ernest J. Gaines books = \$5,000
(This is based on the value of a first edition of each of Gaines's books. The donor does not want her name to be made public)*
 6. *Contribution of two original William Tolliver paintings by Dr. Joseph Riehl
(Appraisals will be obtained.)*

Plans for other external funding have already been initiated. We will also seek revenue for the center through grants from Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Oprah Winfrey Foundation. Our estimated goal for additional revenue from these sources is \$4,000,000.

REVENUE	Year 2 AY 2009-2010
University Appropriation for construction of Ernest J. Gaines Center	\$250,000
University Appropriation for Archivist/Assistant Professor of Library Science	\$42,000
Joe Sanford, Pelican Pictures, contribution (filming and production costs)	\$100,000
Kevin Hagan contribution (graphic design costs)	\$2,000
Dean H. Gordon (architect) and graduate student contribution	\$5,400

<i>Royalties from This Louisiana Thing That Drives Me</i>	\$500,000
TOTAL	\$899,400
COSTS	Year 2 AY 2009-2010
Construction of center	\$250,000
Archivist/Assistant Professor of Library Science	\$42,000
Filming and production costs for documentaries	\$100,000
Graphic Design costs	\$2,000
Architect costs	\$5,400
TOTAL	\$399,400

* Revenues in italics are designated as "pending."

Staff notes that (per information in the budget narrative) there is the possibility that external funding could reach \$4M.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The staff commends the center for its productivity and affirms its relevance to the University. While events to develop the center have not proceeded as initially planned, its list of accomplishments is impressive, and funding secured to-date is sufficient enough to afford center operations through the requested period of approval through June 30, 2010.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant another year of conditional approval through June 30, 2010, for the Ernest J. Gaines Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. If upon expiration of this term the University decides to continue center operations, UL-Lafayette shall submit a request for full approval. Should such a request not be received by the aforementioned date, the Board of Regents shall re-examine the need for this unit.